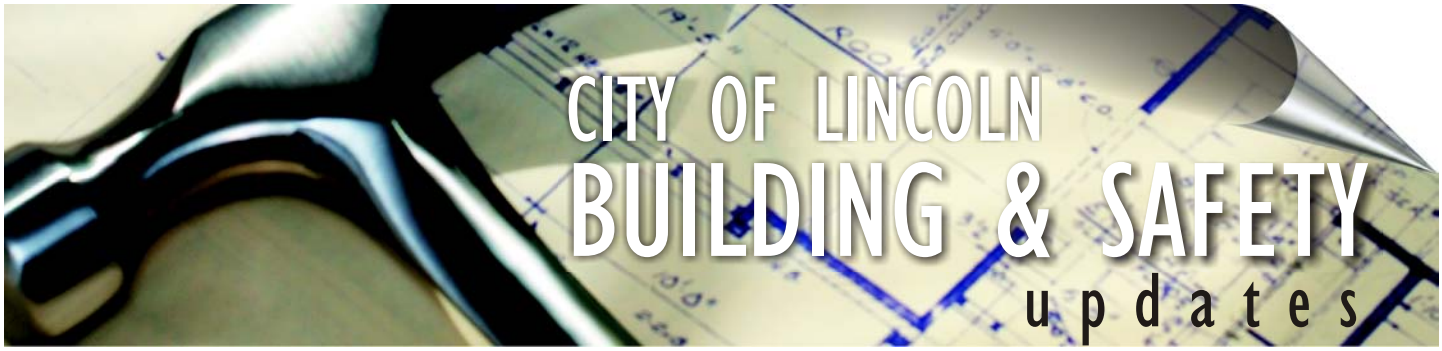


March 2006

MISSION statement

Our responsibility is to assure that the health, fire, and housing safety needs of the public are maintained through adherence to those requirements established by law in the construction or use of every building in the community. This includes buildings in which people live, eat, sleep, play, work, worship, study, recuperate or are entertained. By accomplishing this mission the quality of life in the community is enhanced.

Building & Safety Department

555 S. 10th Street
Room 203
Lincoln, NE 68508-3995

Michael Merwick,
Director 402/441-7049

designed by
CITIZEN INFORMATION CENTER

INDUSTRY NEWS

What's new in the 2006 I-Codes®?

Here are some significant changes:

IBC®

* The minimum required number of accessible public entrances serving a building has been increased to at least 60% of all public entrances.
* Revised language in Section 1004.1 clarifies the procedure for determining design occupant load.
* A change to Section 1604.5 simplifies the seismic design provisions by eliminating Seismic Use Group and replacing it with Occupancy Category.

IRC®

* A new table R302.1 has been introduced to simplify the exterior wall fire resistance rating and openings protection requirements.
* Section R613.2 requires "protection against fall" for windows with a sill located more than 70 inches above the finished grade or surface below.
* Emergency escape and rescue openings are now required to open into a public way by Section R310.1.

IFC®

* The burning of incense, candles, or other open flame in dormitory sleeping units is now prohibited.
* Firefighter safety enhanced by a new section on placards requiring indication of structural stability of dangerous and unsafe vacant buildings.
* Section 903.2.1.2 revised to increase safety in night clubs and similar occupancies.

ADDRESSES ON BUILDINGS

Section R325 of the 2000 International Residential Code states that: "Approved addresses shall be provided for all new buildings in such a position as to be plainly visible and legible from the street or roadway fronting the property."

This is to remind all builders that the dwelling must have the address visible throughout the entire construction process. The address can be attached to the builder's yard sign, spray painted on the foundation or wall of the dwelling or located in the window using the yellow address card provided when the permit is issued.

The address is not only necessary for the inspectors, but for delivery and emergency response personnel.

What is Causing that Rumbling?

People often wonder what causes a rumbling sound in their water heater. The two most likely scenarios are breakage of the dip tube and sediment leakage. In the first scenario, the dip tube in the cold water supply inlet is supposed to run to within three or four inches of the bottom of the water heater. When you turn on the hot water, it forces cold water to the bottom of the heater, which drives hot water out of the heater. If that dip tube deteriorates or breaks off half way into the tank, the capacity of hot water is cut in half, and the cold water meets that hot water, thus causing the rumbling sound.

The second circumstance occurs when the water in the tank is not being heated, some water may leak down through the sediment at the bottom of the tank. This sediment is the result of cold water being heated combining with the various particles settling in the bottom of the tank. When the water is fired up, these drops of water become super heated, and under most circumstances will stay there until some water is used, decreasing the pressure in the tank. These super-heated droplets then exit the sediment entering the tank water as steam and then condense or implode, which cause the rumbling noise. The drain valves near the bottom of the water heater are generally somewhat off the bottom of the tank, which makes it impossible to drain off sediment.

FLOODPLAIN

Updated Floodprone Area maps for Cardwell Branch, Beal Slough and South East Upper Salt Creek were adopted by the City Council on January 9, 2006. The Stevens Creek Floodprone Area map was adopted by the City Council in December of 2004, and recently updated on January 9, 2006.

Flood prone areas are those areas having a 1% chance of flooding in any given year, usually referred to as the 100-year flood. The map update which resulted in the designation of these Floodprone Areas is part of a cooperative effort with FEMA to update the FEMA floodplain maps for Lincoln and Lancaster County. It is expected that sometime within 2007, the Floodprone Areas adopted by the City Council for local regulation will be officially designated as Floodplain on the FEMA floodplain maps.

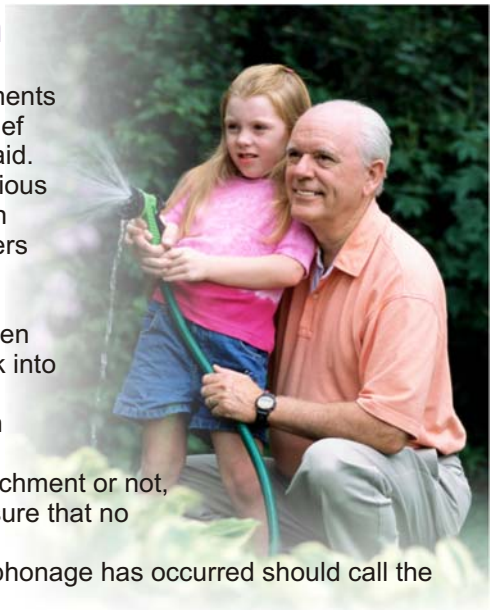
FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Floodplain/Floodprone Area Maps
Maps of both the FEMA-designated Floodplain and the Floodprone Area can be viewed on the City's Web site at lincoln.ne.gov keyword: watershed or interactively on the City's internet map server at http://ims.lincoln.ne.gov.

Floodplain/Floodprone Area Permits
For information regarding floodplain/floodprone development permits, contact Lana Tolbert in the Building & Safety Department at 441-6885 or ltolbert@lincoln.ne.gov.

SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT/SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE IN THE FLOODPLAIN

These terms are important to understand because the City of Lincoln participated in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Under the NFIP any structure that is substantially improved or damaged must be brought into compliance with current floodplain regulations. Substantial improvements are any construction, remodel, addition or alteration to a structure which costs greater than 50% of the current market value. Substantial damage is similar to substantial improvement. Substantial damage may be caused by any means, not only from flooding. It is defined as damage costing more than 50% or the pre-damaged market value of the structure to repair. For more information contact Lana Tolbert at 441-6885.

Weed-killer Sprayers on Hoses Can Be Unsafe



The use of weed-killer spray attachments on garden hoses can be dangerous, chief city plumbing inspector Bob Siemsen said.

Siemsen said people should be cautious when using sprayers attached to garden hoses to apply insecticides or weed killers to yards and gardens.

If the right conditions occur, a back siphonage or vacuum - similar to a broken water main - could draw chemicals back into the hose. A hose-type vacuum breaker put on a silcock can help eliminate such dangers, he said.

Whether a person uses such an attachment or not, water should be run long enough to ensure that no contaminants are in the hose.

A person who suspects that back-siphonage has occurred should call the water utility company, Siemsen said.

an ELECTRICAL PROBLEM for PLUMBERS

Were you aware that by repairing existing metallic water piping with plastic tubing you may have just created an electrical shock or fire hazard and possibly ruined the electrical appliances and electronic devices attached to the wiring because of the plastic piping that you used to make the repair? The electrical industry in Lincoln has been using the metal water pipes for grounding of electrical services ever since electricity was introduced in the City. The electrical service in a structure needs to be grounded in order to make all of the electrical appliances and electronic equipment in your house work properly as well as limit the chance of electrical shocks and fires. In older homes the main ground wire was not always run back to where the water service entered into the building as it is done today. It was merely attached to the nearest cold water pipe that was accessible to the electrician at the time. So if you are repairing or adding on to existing metallic water piping with plastic tubing you may need to consult a qualified electrician to make sure that you are not exposing your customers and yourselves to any undue hazards or claims regarding damaged electrical equipment.